



SALMS OF LIFE.



BY
SARAH DOUDNEY.

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PSALMS OF LIFE.

BY

SARAH DOUDNEY.

WITH A PREFACE

BY THE

REV. R. H. BAYNES, M.A.,

VICAR OF ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, COVENTRY.

“Teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs.”



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P R E F A C E.



I HAVE been asked by my friend, the Author of these "Psalms of Life," to write a preface for her book. I do not think that it needs any preface at all, for it thoroughly explains itself, and will, I believe, find a warm welcome in many a home, and a true response in many a heart. The Hymns are exactly what she has described them, "Psalms of Life." They have been written amid the work and warfare of daily life, and they are full of

thoughts and truths which, by God's good blessing, may help us to do earnestly the one, and wage manfully the other. The highest aspiration of the writer will, I know, be attained, if any words of hers shall minister comfort to the sorrowing, hope to the downcast, and strength to the weary. It is in this blessed ministry for good that the real power and value of Hymns seem to me to consist. They form both the poetic Liturgy of the Church, and the precious heritage of each of her separate members. As I once ventured to say elsewhere,—in the great congregation of Christ's faithful people, amid the far waste of some colonial land, on shipboard, when the eye and ear can discern nothing save God's stars above, and God's great sea around,—in the lone-

liness of the darkened chamber of sickness, and even up to the margin of the cold river of death, next to the words of Holy Scripture and the deep utterances of the Book of Common Prayer, the Hymns of the Church are most cherished and most dear, lifting up the soul by the very melody of well-remembered words, and soothing it with the sweetness of the blessed truths those words enshrine.

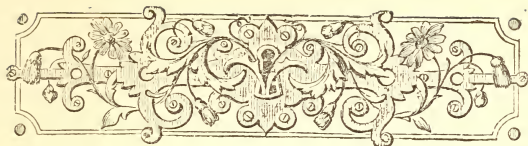
It is no light praise of the "Psalms" that follow, to say that some of them have already been used in the worship of the Church, while others have solaced and cheered some patient sufferers who are not with us now, for their warfare is accomplished, and in the rest of Paradise they behold their Lord.

It only remains to add that most of the "Psalms of Life" have already appeared in periodicals of the day, and that the writer's warm thanks are tendered to those publishers who have so kindly given their permission to reprint her Hymns.*

R. H. BAYNES, M.A.

FEAST OF ST. MICHAEL
AND ALL ANGELS, MDCCCLXXI.

* Amongst these, special mention must be made of the Religious Tract Society, Messrs. Cassell and Co., the proprietors of the *Churchman's Shilling Magazine*, and the publishers of "Songs of Gladness."



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PSALMS OF LIFE.

CHRIST'S INVITATION.

“ Incline your ear, and come unto Me : hear, and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.”

OME unto Me, and rest,
Thou weary heart, distrest
With wasting toil, and strivings vain
and endless ;
Mourning from day to day
For idols passed away ;—
Come unto Me ; I will not leave thee friendless.

I watched thy cisterns fail,
I saw thee spent and pale,
With parchèd lips, and heart with anguish bursting ;
Then, from the desert sod,
Thy cry went up to God ;—
Come unto Me ; I will not leave thee thirsting.

I watched thee strive to feed
On husks that mocked thy need ;
I saw thee faint with weariness and fasting ;

No hand thy want supplied,
Thy brethren turned aside ;—
Come unto Me ; My bread is everlasting.

I watched thy taper gleam
With dim, uncertain beam
Through the long hours of darkness fast declining ;
I saw its flame at last
Quenched by the chill night-blast ;—
Come unto Me ; My light is always shining.

I watched thee stretch thy hands
Across thy barren lands
To harvest-fields where other hands were reaping ;
No golden glories crowned
Thy dry and stony ground ;—
Come unto Me ; I will not leave thee weeping.

For thee I lived and died ;
Behold My Hands,—My Side
Pierced for thy sake ;—hast thou not heard the
story ?

Mark well My Crown of thorn,
My Body bruised and torn ;—
Come unto Me, and thou shalt share My glory.



“ *THINKING OF JESUS.* ”

A poor woman who was dying said in her last hours,
 “I can do nothing for myself,—I cannot even read the
 Bible ; so I lie here, thinking of Jesus.”



THE year is near its end, and hoar-
 frost blanches
 Green turf and dark brown slopes
 at morning prime,
 Sorrowful winds go sighing through the branches,
 Where amber leaves yet linger for a time ;
 Virginian creepers hang their scarlet fringes
 Athwart old crumbling walls, grown worn and
 grey,—
 And solemnly their dying glory tinges
 Yon window with the beauty of decay.

Dim eyes look through the narrow cottage casement,
 Where dark red roses on their slender stalks
 Bow down their heavy heads in self-abasement,
 And drop their petals on the moss-grown walks ;
 Dim eyes—whose glances never more shall brighten
 At sight of young spring blossoms in their bloom,
 Nor need the gleam of primroses to lighten
 The dull grey shadows of the little room.

She will not view those upland fields snow-shrouded,
Nor mark the fair frost-tracery on the pane,
Nor watch the sky by winter gloom o'erclouded,
Nor see the Christmas stars shine out again.
She will not listen to the church bells ringing
From the old tower their Christmas greeting
sweet,
Nor hear the clear child-voices blithely singing
Their ancient carols through the village street.

Yet through the long, long hours, while strength
is wasting,
She lieth calmly in the shadows dim,
"Thinking of Jesus," every moment hasting
Nearer and nearer unto home and Him ;
"Thinking of Jesus," when the moonbeams soften
The room's harsh outlines with a touch of grace ;
"Thinking of Jesus,"—meekly praying often
That ere the day dawn she may see His face.

Her life hath been a time of toil and weeping,
Few sunbeams came to make her pathway bright ;
Her hands have sown, while other hands were
reaping ;
Her heart was sad, while other hearts were light.
Forgotten by the world—by friends forsaken,
In the hard struggle for her daily bread ;
Yet her meek trust in God remained unshaken,—
"Thinking of Jesus," she was comforted.

Ah ! there are many in the world's high places
 Whose minds are filled with thoughts of selfish
 schemes,
 Who wear the weary shadow on their faces,
 That comes of blighted hopes and broken
 dreams ;
 Could they but stand beneath this roof so lowly,
 And see the work that Christ's dear love can do,
 Making the dying spirit calm and holy,
 Would they not long to think of Jesus too ?

Thinking of Him, no earthly hand shall sever
 Her soul's firm tendrils from the living Vine ;
 For faith shall hold Him fast, and trust Him ever—
 Not even death can make that clasp untwine !
 Give me such confidence, Thou blest Redeemer,
 Teach me to love Thee with unwearied zest,
 That I, no more a vain, bewildered dreamer,
 “ Thinking of Jesus,” may find peace and rest.



"A PLACE CALLED GETHSEMANE."

"By Thine agony and bloody sweat ; by Thy cross and passion ; by Thy precious death and burial ; by Thy glorious resurrection and ascension ; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, good Lord, deliver us."

 ONLY Gethsemane,
 My spirit turns to thee
 From this poor world of perishable
 bloom ;
 Seeking thy dusky bowers,
 I muse in silent hours,
 'Mid the dim shadow of thine olive gloom.

For me, O Christ, for me,
 That pallid Brow I see
 Steeped in thick night-dew,—pressed upon the sod ;
 For me, for me, I know
 That Head was bowed so low
 In Thy great conflict, O Thou Son of God !

Visions of coming woes
 In that dread hour arose ;—
 A spectral Cross upon a darkened hill,—
 A maddened, mocking throng,—
 A Victim borne along,—
 Thou sawest all, and Thou wert willing still.

Down in that sombre glade
The paschal moonbeams strayed
Through the deep leafy silence brooding there :
Silvered the olive boughs,
And bound those sacred brows
With a pale ring of glory, dim and fair.

Did not Thine eyes foresee
Another crown,—for Thee,
Woven of thorns, and wet with crimson dew ?
O Love, so sorely tried,
That would not set aside
The pangs which Thine omniscient soul foreknew !

Ah ! when this fevered life
Draws me within its strife,
And holds me in its silken web of lies,
Lead me awhile with Thee
To sad Gethsemane,
Where the dark branches quivered to Thy sighs.

Break Thou the charmèd sleep,
And give me strength to keep
Watch with my Lord one hour, that I may see
A little of that woe
From whence my bliss shall flow,
And know the pain that won such joy for me.

Yea, Jesus, even more ;
If Thy dear Hand should pour
Into my cup a draught of deadly wine,

Let me, for Thy sweet sake,
The bitter chalice take,
Saying, "Thy will be done, O Lord,—not mine!"

So shall this moonlit shade
Dearer to me be made
Than the marred beauty of old Eden bowers ;
Dearer the midnight breeze
That stirs those solemn trees
Than the rich breath of June's full-blossomed
flowers.

Lonely Gethsemane,
My spirit turns to thee,
Seeking thy silent, angel-haunted sod,
In that far Eastern land
Where yet His feet shall stand
When men shall know Him for the Son of God.



THE KNIGHT'S TOMB.

“It is sown in dishonour ; it is raised in glory : it is sown in weakness ; it is raised in power :”

“It is sown a natural body ; it is raised a spiritual body.”

HERE in the old side-chapel, calmly
lying
With hands crossed meekly as a sign
of grace,

And ruby gleams from yon rich window dyeing
The cold white pallor of his sculptured face ;

He sleepeth well ; the tender light hath crowned
him

With a dim aureole of golden mist ;
And the grey shadows ever shifting round him
Are touched by changeful tints of amethyst.

Day after day the deep prayer-music pealing
Through mighty arches, rolls above his breast ;
And flute-like notes from boyish voices stealing
Seem but to lull him into calmer rest.

But who can tell the passion and the anguish,
The long, sad watch that came before the sleep ?
How often did his knightly spirit languish
In the stern vigil it was doomed to keep !

The sword and shield in deadly fight were dinted
Ere Death's low tones might bid the conflict
cease,

And God's white angel with a touch imprinted
On that worn brow his seal of perfect peace.

And we the living, who with quiet paces
Come here to gaze upon his marble bed,
Bringing our restless hearts and care-lined faces
So near the hallowed slumber of the dead ;

We too must know the striving and the failing,
The daily war with unrelenting foes,
Until, by heavenly might at last prevailing,
We gain the victory, and earn repose :

Resting until the trump of resurrection
Awakes us at the Lord's appointed hour,
And our own bodies clad in full perfection,
Once sown in weakness, shall be raised in power.

First the long strife—the sleep—and then the
waking,

The sudden change from peace to ecstasy,
When we, the image of our Maker taking,
Shall wear His likeness through eternity.



"ONE OF THE SONGS OF SION."

"And again they said, Alleluia."

DOWN below me lay the fertile acres,
 By the mellow sunshine warmly
 kissed ;
 Far away I saw the white sea-breakers
 Glimmer through a veil of gauzy mist.

Down below me lay the wooded valleys,
 Shrining village homes and rural loves
 In the quiet of their cool green alleys,
 Haunted by the murmur of the doves.

Sunlit slopes with shady purple tinges,
 Furzy commons stretching free and wide ;
 Solitary pools with reedy fringes,
 Where the moorhen and the plover hide.

At my feet, like filmy fairy tangles,
 Silken webs athwart the turf were spread ;
 And, like gems, the wonderful dew spangles
 Flashed and glittered on each slender thread.

Up above me rose the hill-top, crested
 By an ancient church, all grey and worn ;
 And I paused for weariness, and rested
 In the glory of the early morn.

Sunlight on the summer world was lying,
Darkness veiled my spirit like a shroud !
And I prayed in bitter sorrow, crying
For the light that shines behind the cloud.

Then I wept and listened, waiting, pleading,
Hoping vainly for an answering word ;
But the soft south wind swept by unheeding,
And the harebells quivered, lightly stirred.

Bright-winged butterflies around me fluttered,
Bees were booming through the golden air,
While the troubled soul within me uttered
All her passion in a voiceless prayer.

Lo ! a sudden strain of music straying
Downwards from the church's open door
Hushed the bitter words my heart was saying,
Chased away the cloud for evermore !

Children's voices through the stillness ringing,
Drifted softly far across the sod ;
Children's voices—gladly, sweetly singing
Alleluia to the praise of God.

As a sign of tender love and pity
Came the hallowed tones and lingered long ;
Like a message from the Golden City,
Blending with the notes of earthly song.

Deep into the spirit's darkest regions
Flashed the light, let in by that sweet hymn :
" Alleluia," sing the white-robed legions,
" Alleluia," chant the seraphim !

As the sick man, on his weary pillow,
 Listens for the herald of the dawn ;
 Hears the low breeze rustle through the willow,
 Hears the grasses whisper on the lawn ;

Knowing surely that the gentle warning,
 Lightly breathed by winds upon the earth,
 Is the mystic harbinger of morning,
 Wafted from the chambers of her birth ;

So the soul, in Lenten darkness shrouded,
 Hears the songs of Sion chanted here,
 Surest tokens of that dawn unclouded,
 Soon to burst upon our shadowed sphere.

Surest tokens of the music breaking
 In great waves upon the glassy sea,
 Where the minstrels of the Lord are waking
 Anthems of eternal melody.



THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

“And we also bless Thy holy name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear ; beseeching Thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom.”



HE night steals on apace, and white
mists creep
Over low-lying fields and valleys
still ;
The crimson sky grows dull, and shadows deep
Gather beneath the hill.

Slowly I see the heavens unfold afar,
Like dusky purple curtains softly drawn
Asunder, and one tremulous bright star
Steps out to watch till dawn.

The breezes sleep, but autumn flower-scents roam,
With mystic sweetness in each wandering breath,
As if to tell us of the angels' home,
Where there is no more death.

And thoughts of that far-distant spirit-land
Fill us with longings, till we pine to see
The faces of the lost, and understand
Our life's great mystery.

This we believe, our risen Lord above
Hath knit together in one holy bond
The Church on earth, whose very name we love,
With the great Church beyond.

With angels and archangels, and with all
The company of heaven, do we praise ;
But theirs are now the endless festival,
And ceaseless holy days.

Ours are the Alleluias faint and brief,
The Sundays that like gems lie far apart ;
The " Miserere " chanted low, when grief
Burdens the feeble heart.

Ours is the love for those beyond the strife,
We thank Him in the words well known and
dear,
For all His saints departed from this life
In His own faith and fear.

Ours are the shadows and the gloom of Lent,
And the brief joy while Easter glories shine ;
The comfort of Christ's blessed Sacrament,
His flesh and blood divine.

Theirs is the shade no longer, but the light
That never fades, and Jesu's presence sweet
Revealed not only unto faith, but sight,
Perfect, and most complete.

It is but death's dark curtains that divide
The saints above from those they loved so well ;
Friends may still wander with us side by side,
Near, but invisible ;—

May still at times be suffered to return
To the old haunts they knew in years gone by,
Though human eyes are powerless to discern
These spirit-watchers nigh.

In the unbroken calm of evening hours,
Perchance they walk on earth with noiseless
tread ;
They whisper to us in the sighs of flowers,
Saying, " Be comforted ;

" We too have trod the sad world's thorny way,
Have borne, as ye do now, the secret grief ;
Have seen our earthly hopes, like yours, decay,
And fade as doth a leaf.

" And we have won the rest that ye shall win ;
Hereafter ye shall sing the song of praise
That all Christ's children, who have come within
The Church Triumphant, raise."

" Still the Church Militant must watch and wait,
With eager eyes turned ever to the east ;
Until the Bridegroom opes the golden gate,
And calls her to the feast."

ORGAN NOTES.

“A song and melody, in our heaviness.”



CHOES of cathedral music
 Heard, it may be, long ago,
 Linger with us unforgotten,
 Haunt us still, and live and grow ;
 They are drifting, softly drifting
 Through the wild unrest of life,
 Golden organ notes, uplifting
 Weary souls above the strife.

Though the clamour of the city
 Round our outer being rolls,
 Still those sacred notes are filling
 All the chambers of our souls ;
 As if touched by hands immortal,
 Stray chords, tremulous with love,
 Drifted through some open portal
 Of the wondrous Church above !

In the grey and silent morning,
 Ere the shadows are withdrawn,
 When the white mist hides the valley
 With a veil of airy lawn ;

Then we listen, hearing slowly
Through the stillness deep and calm,
Murmurs of that music holy,
Like the cadence of a psalm.

When the summer sunset lingers
Low adown the crimson west,
And the weary hands are folded
With the blessed sense of rest ;
Then we listen, strengthened, soothèd
By the magic of that strain,
Till the furrowed brow is smoothèd,
And the heart grows young again.

They are drifting, softly drifting
Through the great world's daily strife,
Golden organ notes that tell us
Of a new and better life ;
Low, clear music, sweetly blending
With the spirit's voiceless cry ;
Undertones that have no ending,
Echoes of eternity !



THE CROWN OF PATIENCE.

“If thou wilt not suffer, thou refusest to be crowned ; but if thou desirest to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently.”—THOMAS A KEMPIS.

I KNELT before mine Holy One
 In spring-tide's early days ;
 I worshipped there, the very air
 Was tremulous with praise !
 The song of birds was in the land,
 The wind was cool and sweet ;
 I carried lilies in mine hand,
 And laid them at His feet.
 Then in that morning light He smiled
 As thus He spake to me,—
 “Lo, as the lily among thorns
 Must My beloved be.”

I knelt before mine Holy One
 In summer's balmy hours ;
 The winds were hushed, the earth was flushed
 With lavish bloom of flowers :
 I heard the murmur of the dove
 In forest arches dim ;
 And as a token of my love
 A rose I brought to Him.

Then in that golden light He smiled
As thus He spake to me,—
“Lo ! I alone am Sharon’s Rose,
That blossomed once for thee.”

I knelt before mine Holy One
When songs of joy were borne
From fruitful lands, where busy hands
Were binding up the corn :
The wild flowers drooped upon the plain
Beneath the languid heat ;
I brought an ear of golden grain,
And laid it at His feet.
Then in that mellow light He smiled
As thus He spake to me,—
“I only am the Bread of Life,
And I will nourish thee.”

I knelt before mine Holy One
When all my hopes were dead ;
On field and height, a shroud of white
The silent snows had spread :
No flower was left to live forlorn
And brave the bitter blast ;
I wove a coronal of thorn,
And brought my Lord at last.
Then in that dreary light He smiled
As thus He spake to me,—
“This is the crown, the cruel crown,
That once I wore for thee.

“Go, bind the chaplet round thy brows,
And wear it for My sake ;
With faith and prayer thy slender share
Of sorrow meekly take !
Mine hand shall aid thee in thy need,
My love shall hold thee up ;
But as thou art Mine own indeed,
Thy lips shall taste My cup :
Bear on awhile, My tender care
Shall guard thee day and night,
And give thee for thy crown of thorns
A diadem of light.”



THE CHILDREN'S ANGELS.

“Some have entertained angels unawares.”

THERE lies the village in its nest of green,
With plummy pine trees ever sighing
round ;
And through dark boughs you catch
the silver sheen,
And hear the river-sound :

While clamorous crows across the lowlands call,
Blotting the cloudless sky with sable wings ;
Or perching idly on the grey church wall,
Where fibrous ivy clings.

Here stands the old farmhouse, with moss-grown
eaves,
Where sparrows chirp, and building martins hide ;
Its porch a very bower of dancing leaves,
Its casements opened wide.

Above the golden thatch the sweet-briar flings
Its long green arms, and pink, shell-tinted flowers ;
And soft bird-music from the garden rings
Through long, long summer hours.

Here in the doorway framed in shifting shade,
Mary, the meek house-mother, calmly sits ;
While round her brows the mellow light hath made
A glory as she knits.

Swift glide her glancing needles to and fro,
Her ball of yarn moves softly at her feet ;
Her cheeks are pale, her locks are white as snow,
Her eyes are strangely sweet.

Something outlived and something yet to come
Have set on her calm face the seal it wears ;
You know that when those patient lips are dumb
Her soul is full of prayers.

Ask for the story that she loves to tell,
The simple tale of comfort born in pain ;
A dream perchance it may be called,—ah, well,
Such dreams are not in vain !

“ I had three children, sir ; five years ago
A fever came, and swept my two away ;
It was to me a time of frenzied woe,
I could not weep nor pray.

“ No tender thought of comfort came to me,
And I grew hard and thankless in my grief ;
The cruel wind had stripped my household tree,
And left but one small leaf.

“ I languished in the stillness of the house,
I missed the tiny shouts and words and cries ;
My one wee darling—quiet as a mouse,
Watched me with large, sad eyes.

“ I missed them in the budding days of spring,
I missed them when I saw the ripe nuts fall ;
But when the Christmas chimes began to ring,
I missed them most of all !

“ On Christmas evening in yon little room
My child lay sleeping on her father's knee,
My goodman slumbered too ; and awful gloom
Had settled down on me.

“ Without—I heard the Christmas carols sung ;
Within—I only saw those vacant chairs ;
Ah me ! I shivered in my woe, and wrung
My wild hands unawares !

“ And was I dreaming, sir?—I scarcely know
(The carols sounded louder in the street) :
But a bright angel, white as driven snow,
Sat in each darling's seat.

“ I cannot tell, it might have been a dream,
But from that hour mine agony was past ;
Angels were in the house—I caught the gleam
Of wings around me cast.

“ One blossom springeth when another dies,
 The wild rose blushes in the hawthorn's place ;
 Nought lieth waste—for Nature's hand supplies
 Each void with fresher grace.

“ And in the heart no blanks unfilled remain,
 Each empty seat shall have its angel guest ;
 Our saddest losses bring our highest gain ;—
 Through sorrow cometh rest.

“ That is my story, sir ; and it may be
 A doting mother's fancy, vague and wild ;
 Yet in my soul I know God gave to me
 An angel for each child.”



A FAREWELL COMMUNION.

“Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth.”



NE gleam of rosy fire
Has touched the tall church
spire ;

And the soft dreamy light of early day
Steals through the ancient street,
Where many weary feet
Have trodden patiently their toilsome way.

And, like an olden rhyme,
The silver-sounding chime
Wakens sweet echoes in the thoughtful breast,—
Echoes of other days,
Of peace and prayer and praise,
And tender memories of Sunday rest.

The sweet, sad Autumn weaves
Her crown of crimson leaves,
And a low breeze goes softly singing by ;
With airy touch it waves
The grass upon the graves,
And creeps within the old church door to die.

Here, in the quiet aisle,
I pause a little while
To gaze on vaulted roof and column fair,
And watch the fitful shade
By rainbow colours made
On time-worn pavement and on marble stair.

Father and Friend divine,
In this fair house of Thine,
Where oft in fervent prayer Thy child hath bent,
Let special grace come down,
The closing rite to crown,
Be with me now in this last Sacrament.

O Saviour, ever blest,
My soul first tasted rest
In this dear church, where Thou didst first impart
Thyself in wine and bread,
And here sustained and fed,
I held Thy very Presence in mine heart.

Lord Jesus, deign to pour
Thy gift of life once more
Into my spirit ere I leave this place ;
Let the last banquet be
Sweetest of all to me,
More richly mingled with Thy love and grace.

Help Thou this feeble heart ;
Teach me when I depart
Thy power can reach me o'er life's barren lands ;

Not in this church alone
Thy blessings wait Thine own ;
Thou dwellest not in temples made with hands.

The poorest house of prayer
Is rich if Thou art there ;
When Thou didst celebrate the Paschal Feast,
No pomp of stately gloom
Adorned that "upper room,"
Thou wert Thyself both Sacrifice and Priest.

Do Thou my Guardian be,
Lest I lose sight of Thee
In the fair beauty of Thine earthly fane ;
Unless Thy Spirit's might
Direct mine heart aright,
And fix my thoughts on Thee, all else is vain.

Though blessed be these walls,
Wherein my soul recalls
The day of her espousal unto Thee,
A thousand times more blest
Is that beloved Guest
Who in the wilderness will come to me.



"CLOSER THAN A BROTHER."

"I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear : but now
mine eye seeth Thee."

I.

NTHRONED upon the purple-vested
hills
Sat the fair Autumn in her regal glow,
And the clear voices of the silver rills
Made music down below.

The woods were glorious, but far and near
The scattered leaves their gleams of scarlet shed,
As if the life-blood of the dying year
Had stained them ruby-red.

And the strange stillness soothed us more and more
As on we wandered slowly, hand in hand,
Like lovers in the magic days of yore
Passing through fairy-land.

For twisted roots of wild fantastic shape
Haunted our path with limbs of rugged brown ;
This seemed a satyr, that a goblin ape
Wearing an ivy crown.

O friend, we knew that happiness like ours
Was solemn in its purity, and rare ;
Treading the borders of immortal bowers,
Breathing immortal air !

Then softly as an angel clothed in white
Came Death, and met us with a placid smile ;
Laid on our clasping hands his finger light,
And whispered, " Part awhile."

II.

Low in the heavens stooped the fiery sun,
Flushing the peaceful landscape far and wide ;
When sudden I became aware of One
Close walking by my side.

He spake of comfort, but I would not weep,
Wrapping the chilly mantle of despair
More closely round my stricken soul, to keep
All hope from entrance there.

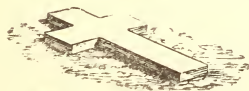
At length, grown weary of my woe, I turned
To gaze awhile on my companion's face ;
Ah me ! I trembled, for mine eyes discerned
Thereon a blood-red trace.

" Is this," I said, " the sunset's parting stain
That casts a rosy shadow on Thy brow ?"
But faster fell the drops like crimson rain,
" Ah, Lord, I know Thee now !

“ Forgive the feeble soul that understands
So little of this wondrous love of Thine.”
He answered, holding out His piercèd hands,
“ Was any grief like Mine ? ”

I knelt and kissed my Saviour's wounded feet,
Like Magdalene I washed them with my tears :
Fast flowed the healing waters fresh and sweet
From fountains sealed for years.

Then on my trembling lips I felt His kiss,
I heard His promise of eternal rest ;
The world grew darker, but the light of bliss
Remained within my breast.



THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.” “Thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit.”



SOFT wind-voices through the pine
boughs straying,
Swinging the plummy branches to
and fro ;

Who shall declare the words that ye are saying,
Or follow where ye go ?

Ye murmur—and the full-blown blossoms quiver,
While seeds of life are wafted through the air ;
Ye mutter—and the foam-pearls strew the river,
And tall reeds tremble there.

Great is the Hand that scatters blessings seed-like,
Whose germs are carried by His Spirit's wings ;
Blest is the pliant soul that bendeth reed-like
Before its whisperings.

O give us grace to hear its mystic sighing,
To catch the music of its lightest tone ;
And let the echo in our hearts replying,
Thy Spirit-message own.

Grant us Thy power, O Lord, to shape and fashion
 The deed that springs from the imparted thought;
 Oh, give us words to speak our poet-passion,
 And tell what Thou hast wrought !

Oh, bend the stubborn knees in meek devotion,
 Oh, bow the haughty souls in humble prayer ;
 And let Thy rushing wind of pure emotion
 Clear all the tainted air.

Not unto us, O Christ, shall praise be given,
 To Thee be glory for Thy gift divine,
 With sin and wrath Thy Spirit's might hath striven,
 And all the work is Thine.

The one pure feeling through our darkness drifting,
 White-winged and beautiful as some stray dove,
 The sudden prayer our heavy hearts uplifting
 With all the strength of love ;

The kind word uttered to the feeble-hearted,
 The bold word spoken that Thy light may shine,
 These are the promptings by Thy breath imparted,
 And all the praise is Thine.

O soft wind-voices through the pine-boughs stray-
 ing,
 We cannot trace the airy paths ye go ;
 O breath of God, our human spirits swaying,
 Thy way we cannot know !

A PILGRIM'S PRAYER.

“Those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask, vouchsafe to give us for the worthiness of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”



WEARY and sad to-night,
 I look to Thee for light ;
 Thick darkness rests upon the
 road I tread;
 Let but one beam of Thine
 Over the pathway shine,
 And Thy poor pilgrim shall be comforted.

Longing for strength and grace,
 I strive to see Thy face,
 Like some lone worshipper in dim-lit aisle
 Seeking with earnest gaze
 To pierce the twilight haze
 That veils from him the Saviour's pictured smile.

Still for Thy voice I pine,
 Catching a word of Thine
 As one who hears amid the city's roar
 Some low-toned silver note
 Of chanting voices float
 Forth from the grey cathedral's open door.

Saviour and Brother dear,
I know that 'Thou art near,
In Thy blest presence would my soul rejoice ;
But this dim mortal sight
Can scarce perceive Thy light,
And these dull ears but faintly hear Thy voice.

Watch me and guard me well,
Lest the world's evil spell
Breathed on my faith should make the flame expire ;
Strengthen the feeble hands
To work at Thy commands,
And fill the heart with heavenly desire.

Let me be purified
As gold by fire is tried,
Make me a jewel meet for Thee to wear ;
Cleanse Thou my garment's stain,
Let it be white again
As angels' raiment, beautiful and fair.

Sustain me when I sink,
And suffer me to drink
Of living water that I thirst no more ;
Over this desert sand
Guide me like Israel's band,
And let Thy cloudy pillar go before.

Give me the power to pray,
Call back the thoughts that stray
On airy wings, in vain unmeaning flight ;

Jesus, be all-in-all,
Hold every sense in thrall,
And thrill the soul with infinite delight.

Let faith be granted me
Thy heavenly Face to see,
Mine unbelief alone creates the cloud ;
Only my doubts and fears
Keep from my longing ears
The blessed Voice that speaketh clear and loud.

Give me sweet hours of rest,
Leaning upon Thy breast
Like the belov'd disciple ; let me be
A favoured child of grace,
Held in my Lord's embrace
Close to the Heart so deeply pierced for me.



EVENSONG.

“I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest : for it is
Thou, Lord, only, that makest me dwell in safety.”



SINKS the kingly sun in crimson
splendour,
While the sweet bells chime for
evensong ;
Comes the evening breeze with murmurs tender
Rustling in the churchyard grasses long.

Fall the autumn leaves, with glory painted,
Like the tints from chancel windows shed,
Where the vestments of the figures sainted,
Blaze with amber glow and ruby red.

Showers of gold and scarlet hide the mosses
That have clustered on the churchyard way ;
Sunset colours rest upon the crosses,
And the hallowed walls so grave and grey.

Drifting through the church's open portal,
See the dead leaves scattered on the aisle ;
But the Tree of Life hath leaves immortal,
We shall pluck them in a little while.

Yonder where the trailing ivy fetters
Stones all lichen-grown, and grey with years,
We may trace some broken, worn-out letters,
Seen but dimly through our falling tears.

Time will wear away these feeble traces ;
Names of those released from earthly strife
May be gone from graveyard resting-places,
But are written in the Book of Life.

Nothing shall be lost ; His promise liveth
Through the ages ; Jesus Christ will keep
All the Father gave Him, and He giveth
His beloved ones the gift of sleep.

But the bells have ceased ; the organ pealing
Calls us with its music deep and strong ;
Let us enter here, and meekly kneeling,
Ask Him to accept our evensong.

Father, let our evening praise ascending
Unto Thee find favour in Thine eyes :
Jesus ! may Thy Holy Spirit blending
With our prayers, make pure the sacrifice.

Let these weary hearts grow lighter, thinking
Of the land where there is no more night ;
Show the feeble faith, so nearly sinking,
One bright vision of intense delight !

Let one golden harp-note reach us clearly
 From that white-robed multitude of Thine ;
 Lift our souls by one faint echo merely
 Of the anthems raised by choirs divine.

Let the angels—who unseen behold us,
 Watching at Thy bidding evermore—
 Roll away the shadows that enfold us,
 And reveal one glimpse of yonder shore.

Guard us waking, Saviour, guard us sleeping ;
 Let no evil dreams our rest destroy ;
 Bring us safely through the night of weeping
 To the glory of Thy morn of joy.



LIGHT ABOVE THE CITY.

“There is sprung up a light for the righteous, and joyful gladness for such as are true-hearted.”

 ABOVE—soft clouds like tinted snow-
drifts flying
Over the quiet sky, so calmly
bright ;

Beneath the city with its house-roofs lying
Veiled by the tender haze of dying light :
Above—the solemn peace, the tranquil glory
That follows oft a day all dim with showers ;
Beneath—the great unrest, the old, sad story,
The throbbing pulses of this world of ours.

The golden rays grew paler as they drifted
Down into crowded places foul and dun ;
Only the tall spires, out of shadow lifted,
Caught the last brightness of the sinking sun :
Night hovers in the streets, while daylight lingers
Still in those upper realms so purely clear,—
Weaving her sable shroud with hasty fingers
To cover every touch of radiance here.

Rich city, with thy gathered heaps of treasure,
Thy sculptured palaces of regal state,
Where Dives, clad in purple, feasts at pleasure,
While Lazarus starves unheeded at the gate ;

Hast thou no earnest glances, upward tending,
Which turn from earth to seek this placid sky?
Hast thou no silent breath of prayer ascending
From human hearts grown sick with vanity?

Yea, from the narrow court and gloomy alley
Rises the spirit's incense fresh and sweet,—
Pure as the sighs of lilies of the valley,
Whose fragrance floats along the sordid street ;
There are wise virgins here, whose lamps are burning
Through the long vigil with unfailing light ;
These watch in patience for the Lord's returning,
And for His sake they keep their garments white.

They hear a sound of golden harp-notes stealing
Through the loud tumult of the city's din ;
And each repining thought and bitter feeling
Is silenced by that holy strain within ;
With every cry of weariness and sorrow
Comes the soft music of some undertone,
To tell them of the glorious to-morrow,
When Jesus Christ shall comfort all His own.

For such as these, the Light above the city
Is shining even in their darkest hours,
While the gay world, too wild to pause and pity,
Goes trampling underfoot life's withered flowers,
And the low wail of pain is sadly sighing
Through the exultant sounds of festal song ;
God's faithful children, on His word relying,
Look upward to His heaven, and grow strong.

These feeble hands the Father deigns to strengthen,
These wounded hearts He heals with balm of
love ;

Life's eventide draws on,—the shadows lengthen,
But light still dwells in those pure skies above !

Soon shall the rush of countless angel-pinions
Sweep through the air ; and loud the herald's cry
Shall ring throughout the world's defiled dominions,
“ Behold, O earth, the Bridegroom draweth nigh ! ”



THE DESERTED HOUSE.

“We have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”



HE old house is deserted ;
 And throughout the bleak March
 day
 Come the fitful, sad sea breezes,
 Round its silent walls to play ;
 And the wild March rains are beating
 On the green lawn, smooth and fair,
 While the lonely weeping willow
 Trails its wind-tossed branches there.

No faces at the windows,
 And no footsteps in the hall :
 For there broods a sullen silence
 While the shadows rise and fall ;
 And the restless winds of ocean
 Blowing far across the foam,
 Moan a passing wail of pity
 For the place once called a home.

But there were children's voices
 In that house a while ago ;
 And the sound of little footsteps
 Pattered lightly to and fro ;

There where rosy, childish faces
At the windows often pressed ;
And in those dismantled chambers
Happy children went to rest.

And looking from the casements,
Youthful dreamers loved to gaze
Farathwart the waste of waters,
Dim with golden sunset haze ;
When the soul was yet unburdened,
And the fancy wandered free,
And life's secrets lay unfathomed
Like the wonders of the sea !

In those dim rooms, together
Gathered parents, young and old,
When the Christmas psalms were chanted,
And the Christmas stories told ;
When the glow of winter firelight
Gleams of changeful glory shed
On the grey hairs of the grandsire,
And the baby's golden head :

And there were secret struggles,
Mighty battles fought unknown ;
For the silent mystic conflict
Could be seen by God alone ;
When the quiet walls have echoed
To a wounded spirit's cry,
And a mute white face was lifted
In a prayer of agony.

And there were deep rejoicings
When the gloomy shades were past,
And the glimmer of the day-dawn
Broke upon the soul at last ;
O the strange unwritten stories
That these silent chambers hold !
O the mysteries of passion
That no language shall unfold !

Time worketh wondrous changes,
And the lone heart weepeth sore
O'er the goodly halls, deserted
By the guests that come no more ;
And it sees not at its threshold
How the Saviour, knocking, stands,
How He waits to lead it upward
To "a house not made with hands."

For He hath many mansions
In His Father's kingdom bright ;
And they need not star nor sunshine,
For His glory giveth light :
There the peace is never broken,
For the rest is calm and sweet ;
And the scattered gems are gathered,
And the parted friends shall meet.

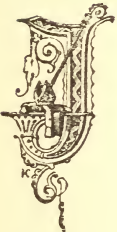
Thou knowest, loving Jesus,
How to our poor homes we cling,

Though the tenants are departed,
And have left us sorrowing :
Take us quickly to Thy household,
Hear our spirits' earnest prayer,
That the circle of our dear ones
May be found unbroken there !



LAST WORDS.

“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest.”

“ESUS, I wait.” Last words breathed
 soft and low
 From dying lips grown tremulous
 and faint :
 O Great Life-giver, Thou didst
 surely know
 The yearnings of Thy saint.

Waiting,—a moment only,—just a pause,
 A hush before the music had begun ;
 A silence ere the cloudy veil withdraws,
 And the bright home is won.

“Jesus, I wait.” Was He not waiting too,
 With hands outstretched in welcome, and with
 eyes
 Brimful of love, to guide His servant through
 The gates of Paradise ?

O calm, safe rest ! all sorrows passed away
 Like twilight mists before a risen moon ;
 O blessed close to life's most weary day !
 O peace attained so soon !

Teach us to live, and living, wait for Thee,
Redeemer,—making life and labour sweet ;
Watching and working till our eyes shall see
The Face they long to greet.

Our highest earthly bliss, to do Thy will ;
Our hope, the promise of Thy great reward ;
Our effort, all Thy purpose to fulfil,
And magnify the Lord.

Teach us to wait,—as waits the ripened corn
In golden fulness for the reaper's hand ;
Meet for Thy garner, when the harvest morn
Dawns o'er the weary land.

And Thou wilt come with radiant angel train,
Lord of the harvest ; claiming all Thine own ;
Then shall we greet our dearest ones again,
And know as we are known.

Then shall the endless festival begin,
And the long waiting, as a dream, go past ;
For love, triumphant over death and sin,
Shall reign supreme at last.



"GOD SHALL WIPE AWAY ALL TEARS."

"And sorrow and mourning shall flee away."



HERE are some whose tears are ready ;
 There be some who cannot weep,
 But with faces calm and steady,
 All their keenest sorrows keep :
 Those, like April clouds, soon breaking
 Into brief and sudden rain ;
 These, like frozen rivers fettered
 By the winter's binding chain.

And the tears set soon a-flowing
 May as easily be dried ;
 But some hearts would break in knowing
 All the woe of tears denied,
 Did not He whose tender pity
 Our unspoken anguish hears,
 Touch the rock and bring the waters,
 For He knows our need of tears.

Yes, He knoweth ; and the blessing
 That our souls have often kept,
 When life's cross was sorely pressing,
 Is the brief text, "Jesus wept :"

For we hear not that the angels
Shed one tear for mortal woe,
But our Maker took our nature
And our sorrows here below.

When the city lay before Him
With its sun-touched towers so fair,
When the people's shouts rose o'er Him,
And "hosannas" rent the air;
Saw He not those bright domes glimmer
Through the mist of tears all dim?
Wept He not in His compassion,
'That they would not come to Him?

There be tears too often wasted
In the early days of youth,
For the wine that palls when tasted,
For the love that has no truth:
For the dreams that passion nurtures
In the restless brain and heart,
Till the stern, cold voice of reason
Bids the dreams and dreamer part.

There be tears for human blindness,
For the errors of our life,
That have made our love unkindness,
And have turned our peace to strife;
When we weep o'er self-formed fetters
'That our hands can ne'er undo,
Chafing madly at the bondage
Which may not be broken through.

There be tears, more sad than any,
For the good that might have been ;
For the squandered moments many,
For the grain we did not glean
When we lingered in the corn-fields,
Singing songs till set of sun,
Till the last, last sheaf was gathered,
And the harvest-time was done.

We are longing, ever yearning
For the time when Thou wilt reign,
A triumphant King returning
To Thy waiting bride again ;
When Thou comest in Thy glory
To begin the world's new day,
And the tears from off all faces
Thy dear Hand shall wipe away.



SPRING THOUGHTS.

“O all ye green things upon the earth, bless ye the Lord :
praise Him and magnify Him for ever.”



SAW the light of spring lie broad and soft
On rich brown furrows tinged with
emerald hue,
And pure white clouds were drifting far
aloft
O'er a wide sea of blue.

Between the ferny banks all green and moist,
I wandered slowly down a sheltered way,
Hearing the mavis piping dulcet-voiced
His ancient roundelay.

The strength of spring is in the swelling buds,
And a dim greenness clothes the naked trees ;
Amid the mosses gleam like ivory studs
The wood-anemones.

A golden touch unbinds the captive rill,
The angry winds have ceased their bitter strife ;
This world that lay so mute, and cold, and still,
Has passed from death to life.

We had long patience, Father, for Thy spring,
We sat in tears, or lifted up our hands
With passionate prayers to hear Thy minstrels sing
Throughout our silent lands.

And it hath come, the sweet hope long deferred ;
The truth of Thine old promise seems revealed
In rapturous warblings of each happy bird,
In green blades of the field.

Could we not trust Thee when our woods were bare,
And Thy cloud-curtains hid the genial light ?
While snowflakes whirling through the wintry air
Buried our dead from sight ?

Only at times our fretful hearts have traced
Thy purpose in the storm-cloud and the rain,
Knowing the Hand that laid our fair earth waste
Could make it bloom again.

And yet, beneath the snow-shroud white and chill
The hidden germs of life lay safe and deep ;
And all Thy vital laws were working still,
Though we might doubt and weep.

Has not our feeble faith Thy Spirit grieved ?
Have we not wearied Thee with thankless sigh,
Forgetting all Thy blessed gifts received
In fruitful days gone by ?

O give us grace in surest hope to dwell,
Until Thy love shall clothe each barren spot !
Teach us to feel Thou doest all things well,
Although we see Thee not.

TRIAL.

“If in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?”

 F in the palmy hours of youth,
Thy life's fair morning-tide,
Thou tremblest at the mimic waves
O'er which thy bark must glide,
What wilt thou do when Jordan's flood
Swells in its angry might,
And the clear azure of the skies
Is changed to darkest night?

If in the sunny land of peace
Wherein thou trustest now,
Thy heart is vexed when blossoms fall
From some o'erladen bough,
What wilt thou do when all thy flowers
Lie desolate and dead,
And the sere leaves of withered hopes
Rustle beneath thy tread?

If at some passing April shower
Through which the sunlight shines,
Thy chafing spirit murmurs sore,
Thy wayward will repines,

What wilt thou do when winter rain
Beats wildly on thy breast,
Without a single shelter near
To give thee peace and rest ?

If in these tranquil days of ours
Thy weak hand fears to raise
The holy symbol of thy faith,
Or speak thy Master's praise,
What wilt thou do in coming years,
If some with sword and flame
Should dare thee boldly to confess
The Saviour's worthy Name ?

O thank the Father if His love
Hath led thy pilgrim feet
Along a safely sheltered way,
Through pastures green and sweet ;
A sterner, darker path *they* knew,
Those saints of high renown ;
For he must bear the martyr's pain
Who wins the martyr's crown !

Beyond dark Jordan's rolling waves
The Golden City lies,
And from its pearly portals wide
Float holy melodies ;
The voices of the ransomed there
Ring o'er death's swelling tide ;
Lift up thy head ; be strong—thou too
Shalt reach the other side !

Listen ! they sing the Lamb's new song !
In bitter, bygone years
They learned the prelude of that strain
With sighs and woe and tears ;
They learned it here with breaking hearts
In scorn and sorrow then ;
But angels swell the chorus now,
And join the grand Amen.

Roll on, dark Jordan ; not the force
Of gathered wave on wave
Can keep one feeble pilgrim back
Whom Jesus died to save ;
Roll on,—the silver voices soar
Above thy troubled foam,
That those who breast thy tide may hear
The music of their home.



“TRULY MY HOPE IS EVEN IN THEE.”

“The more the outward man decayeth, strengthen him, we beseech Thee, the more continually with Thy grace and Holy Spirit in the inner man.”



ES, I am waiting, very calmly waiting
 Until the silver cord is loosed ; I
 know,
 By weariness increased and strength
 abating,
 That Death comes quickly : it is better so.

Familiar things are round me, all unchanging
 With the great change that stealeth over me ;
 From bough to bough the birds I loved are ranging,
 The violets bloom beneath my favourite tree.

How strange it seems thou wilt flow on, bright river,
 Winding thy silver course through valleys fair ;
 While on thy breast the golden sunbeams quiver,
 And the white lilies float serenely there.

Still the west wind will murmur to the larches
 With the old music I have known so long,
 That stirred the tracery of sylvan arches,
 And filled the pauses in the blackbird's song.

I know the carpet of the shady dingle
Is thick with moss, and many a primrose gem ;
There hyacinths and wavy fern-plumes mingle,
And village children go to gather them.

They bring them to the Church, where willing fingers
The buds and blossoms busily entwine ;
And gladly o'er the work each spirit lingers,—
But Easter wreaths will own no touch of mine.

Oft I have pictured in my silent dreaming
That ancient house of prayer on Easter morn,
With the rich light through jewelled windows
streaming
On the frail symbols of the woodlands born !

While every Christian soul therein rejoices
To sing Thy praise, O Lord of power and might !
And the great volume of the chanting voices
Mingles with those that “rest not day nor night.”

Yea, theirs will be the Feast,—the Body broken,
The precious Wine that hath so oft sufficed
To cheer sad hearts ; the benediction spoken,
The mystic presence of the risen Christ.

Do Thou, O living Lord, my darkness lighten,
Make Thou a temple of my lonely room ;
And let one sunbeam of Thy glory brighten
These long, long hours of weariness and gloom.

“ Truly my Hope is even in Thee.” 67

I will be patient till the summons reach me,
That calls me evermore with Thee to dwell ;
But ere I go, I pray Thee, Father, teach me
To value here Thy gift unspeakable.

Lead me a little while beside still waters,
And let my soul in Thy green pastures feed ;
Till with Thy ransomed flock, Thy sons and
daughters,
I go where Thou fulfillest all my need.

Then though this mortal flesh, because of weakness,
Permits me not in yon dear Church to be,
I yet may hope, with reverence and in meekness,
That Thou, my great High Priest, wilt come to
me !



"DELIVER US FROM EVIL."

"Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe."

ORD of Thy church, we pray
That Thou wilt guard our feet from
evil snares ;
Let no temptations overtake to-day
Thy children unawares.

Keep us from hurtful things,
And fill our souls so full of love and grace,
That worldly thoughts, and vain imaginings
May find no vacant place.

Deliver us from pride ;
Teach us, Thou lowly One, to learn of Thee,
That we in meekness ever may abide,
And deep humility.

Keep us from unbelief ;
Let not the feeble flame of faith expire ;
Breathe on the soul so dim with doubt and grief,
And kindle holy fire.

Deliver us from strife ;
Let not our words like poisoned arrows fly,
But bid us look upon Thy blameless life,
Thy perfect charity.

Keep us from craven fear,
That makes us shrink to wear Thy holy sign ;
Rather let grateful hearts that hold Thee dear
Exult in being Thine.

Thus let us follow Thee
Humbly and prayerfully, through joy or shame ;
And teach us so to live, that we may be
Worthy of Thy dear Name.



IN TIME OF SICKNESS.

“I will be glad, and rejoice in Thy mercy: for Thou hast considered my trouble, and hast known my soul in adversity.”



SAVIOUR, in mine hours of pain
Send Thy Comforter to me ;
All my sorrow shall be gain,
If it brings one smile from Thee ;
In the time of sharp distress
Let me prove Thy tenderness.

When this weary brow is worn
By an anguish sore and keen,
Jesus, show Thy crown of thorn,
Teach me what Thy woe hath been ;
O Thou Sufferer divine,
Was there any grief like Thine ?

Set Thy precious Cross on high,
Show Thy sacred Wounds afresh ;
Thine was human agony,
Thou didst suffer in the flesh :
Saviour, when Thy pangs are shown,
Shall I not forget mine own ?

Let this restless soul grow calm
When Thy proofs of love I see ;
Pour Thy crimson Blood as balm
On the heart that longs for Thee :
Lamb of God, if Thou art near,
Even sorrow will be dear.

In Thy holy Church to-day
Let Thy blessed Spirit wait ;
Father, hear when Christians pray
For the sick and desolate ;
Comfort those who cannot share
In Thy sacred service there.

Thou canst raise an altar up,
Even in this heart of mine ;
There Thy grace can fill the Cup
With Thy life-restoring Wine ;
And my hungry soul is fed
By Thine everlasting Bread.

Then these hours of pain shall be
Hours of holiness and love ;
Hours of fellowship with Thee,
Visions of Thy bliss above ;
Wings, wherewith my soul may rise
To the joys of paradise.



CHRISTMAS CHIMES.

“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift.”



HE winds are hushed, and pallid sun-
beams glisten
On the dark ivy and the crystal
snow ;
Chime on, sweet bells, while Christian spirits listen
To strains of long ago.

And who can say what tender recollections
Of happy hours, and sorrowful farewells,
Voices long hushed, and slumbering affections,
Are wakened by the bells?

Our powers decay, our voices fail and alter,
Time mars the music of the sweetest tongue ;
Theirs are the tones that never change nor falter,
Old, and yet always young.

They bear to-day the ancient consolation ;
A message “of great joy” their chime imparts,
Stirring, with mystical reverberation,
Thousands of weary hearts.

Listen—they speak to thee, O mourning mother !

The Father will not leave thee all alone ;
One hope is taken, but He gives another,
The Christ-child is thine own.

A new-born babe, He cometh, meek and lowly,
To fill the void within thine aching breast ;
To soothe thee with His love, so deep and holy,
And give thee perfect rest.

They speak to thee, O dreamer broken-hearted,
Whose earthly lights have paled, or ceased to
shine ;
Why dost thou weep for fickle beams departed,
When Jacob's Star is thine ?

Lift up thine eyes ; that Light of Life immortal
Shall chase all shadows from thy rugged way,
Guiding thy feet to heaven's golden portal,
Turning thy night to day.

Chime on, sweet bells, your Christmas greetings
flinging
Like precious pearls upon the weary earth ;
'The world is sad ; but faith and hope up-springing,
Shall hail Messiah's birth.



ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS.

“Mercifully grant that as Thy holy Angels always do Thee service in heaven, so by Thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth.”



WARM September sunset richly
shading
The furrowed uplands with a
golden gleam ;
And far away the dim hill-purples
fading
Into a dusky dream.

An autumn peace on all the landscape sleeping,
Sweeter than summer light or bloom of spring ;
And this low wind, across the meadow sweeping,
Sounds like an angel's wing.

Ay, surely they are near us,—angel legions
Are drifting downwards through the quiet air,
Bearing glad tidings from immortal regions
To earth-born sons of care.

O everlasting God, Who hast ordained
These bright-winged ministers to do Thy will,
Let them be with us when our faith hath wanèd,
To watch and comfort still.

Thou knowest all our conflict—all the failing
Of flesh and spirit lured by evil powers,
The sore temptations these poor hearts assailing
In our unguarded hours.

The bitter strife,—the conquest won so dearly,
The feeble strength that seems so fiercely tried ;
Thou knowest all—O Father, show us clearly
The bright ones on our side !

Show us the serried ranks that ever cluster
Round the baptizèd children of the Lord ;
Each with white robes that never lose their lustre,
And adamantine sword !

So shall we fear no evil : living, dying,
Our souls are in Thy care, Thou wilt defend
The faithful servants on Thy love relying,
Even until the end.



THE CHRISTIAN'S "GOOD NIGHT!"

The early Christians were accustomed to bid their dying friends "Good night !" so sure were they of their awaking at the Resurrection morning.



LEEP on, beloved, sleep and take thy
rest,
Lay down thy head upon thy Saviour's
breast ;

We love thee well, but Jesus loves thee best ;—
Good night !

Calm is thy slumber as an infant's sleep ;
But thou shalt wake no more to toil and weep ;
Thine is a perfect rest, secure and deep ;—
Good night !

Until the shadow from this earth is cast,
Until He gathers in His sheaves at last,
Until the Lenten gloom is overpast ;—
Good night !

Until the Easter glory lights the skies,
Until the dead in Jesus shall arise,
And He shall come—but not in lowly guise ;—
Good night !

The Christian's " Good Night ! " 77

Until, made beautiful by love divine,
Thou in the likeness of thy Lord shalt shine,
And He shall bring that golden crown of thine ;—
Good night !

Only " Good night ! " beloved, not " Farewell ! "
A little while, and all His saints shall dwell
In hallowed union, indivisible ;—
Good night !

Until we meet again before His throne,
Clothed in the spotless robe He gives His own ;
Until we know, even as we are known ;—
Good night !



TAKE UP THY CROSS.

“In the world ye shall have tribulation.”

“AKE up thy cross, and follow Me,”
 (Dost thou not hear thy Saviour
 say?)
 “And as thy day thy strength shall
 be,

I am the Life, the Truth, the Way.

An easy path, a flowery road,
 Behold, I have not promised thee ;
 But I will help thee bear thy load :
 Take up thy cross, and follow Me.

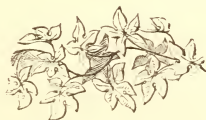
“Storm-tossed, or scorched by noontide heat,
 Press on across the desert lone ;
 With aching brow and bleeding feet,
 I lead thee on by ways unknown :
 A life of woe and strife and fears
 Thy course on earth must ever be,
 But I will wipe away thy tears :
 Take up thy cross, and follow Me.

“I give thee neither gold nor gem,
 No earthly treasure thou shalt share ;
 Mine is a thorny diadem,
 And such must all My servants wear ;

But far above the starry height,
 Within the home prepared for thee,
 Thy crown of glory glitters bright :
 Take up thy cross, and follow Me.

“ My little flock, a weary band
 By foes and trials sore distressed,
 Must journey to the promised land,
 And trust My love to give them rest :
 Streams from the smitten rock shall flow,
 And angels’ food thy bread shall be ;
 For all thy need I surely know :
 Take up thy cross, and follow Me.”

Yea, Lord, we come our cross to take ;
 O give us grace to watch and pray !
 Content to suffer for Thy sake,
 Content to tread Thy rugged way ;
 O strengthen every trembling heart
 That longs yet fears Thine own to be ;
 Speak Thou, and bid our doubts depart :
 We will leave all, and follow Thee.



A MORN OF JOY.

“The oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.”

HERE in the old church porch we meet
again
After long years ; it seems like some
sweet story,

For us, whose paths so long apart have lain,
To stand together in June's early glory !
Fair looks the land about us : o'er the scene
Float some light mists, the summer's airy gauzes ;
And strangely solemn, coming in between
Our talk, the old church bells fill up the pauses.

I have come hither very sore of heart
On many bygone Sundays, praying only
For strength to bear my cross and do my part
In life, although my way were dark and lonely ;
And God hath sent His Comforter, until
The weary mind of half its load was lightened ;
And I walked homewards through the woodland
still,
With stronger hope ; and faith restored and
brightened.

Now the old grief is ended : but I take
My present happiness in grateful quiet ;
Yet in past years I know such bliss would make
Each pulse within me beat in rapturous riot ;

But those wild days are gone, and better far
Is this deep sober gladness,—calmer, purer
Than the outpourings of youth's first hopes are ;—
Those joys may be more ardent,—these are surer.

Let us thank God together ; we shall feel
More fitted for this happier existence,
If at its opening, side by side we kneel,
And see past troubles in the fading distance ;
And He who gave us His unfailing care
Through wasting years, and held us in His
keeping,
Will teach us in humility to bear
The morn of joy, as the long night of weeping.

Listen,—the organ's swelling waves of sound
Summon the worshippers to prayer and praises ;
The place whereon we stand is holy ground,
For here the dead sleep on beneath the daisies,
While we, the living, bless Thee, gracious Lord,
With feeble lips and utterance faint and broken ;
Thou wilt despise us not, we oft have poured
Into Thine ear heart-breathings never spoken !

This day shall never be forgotten ; when
The mortal shall have put on the immortal,
And the freed spirit, all untrammelled then,
Escapes the limits of life's narrow portal ;
As now we enter His own church to-day,
We ask, while faith and love our souls embolden,
To pass as calmly from Time's shadows gray
Into thy gates, Jerusalem the Golden !

THE LESSON OF THE WATER-MILL.

“But this I say, brethren, the time is short.”

ISTEN to the water-mill ;
Through the livelong day
How the clicking of its wheel
Wears the hours away !
Languidly the autumn wind
Stirs the forest leaves,
From the field the reapers sing
Binding up their sheaves ;
And a proverb haunts my mind
As a spell is cast ;
“The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past.”

Autumn winds revive no more
Leaves that once are shed,
And the sickle cannot reap
Corn once gatherèd ;
Flows the ruffled streamlet on,
Tranquil, deep, and still ;
Never gliding back again
To the water-mill :
Truly speaks that proverb old,
With a meaning vast,—
“The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past.”

Take the lesson to thyself,
True and loving heart ;
Golden youth is fleeting by,
Summer hours depart ;
Learn to make the most of life,
Lose no happy day,
Time will never bring thee back
Chances swept away !
Leave no tender word unsaid,
Love while love shall last ;
“The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past.”

Work while yet the daylight shines,
Man of strength and will !
Never does the streamlet glide
Useless by the mill ;
Wait not till to-morrow's sun
Beams upon thy way,
All that thou canst call thine own
Lies in thy “ to-day ;”
Power, and intellect, and health
May not always last ;
“The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past.”

O the wasted hours of life
That have drifted by !
O the good *that might have been*,—
Lost, without a sigh !

Love that we might once have saved
By a single word,
Thoughts conceived, but never penned,
Perishing unheard ;—
Take the proverb to thine heart,
Take, and hold it fast,—
“The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past.”



THE HILLS.

“ I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills.”



COME, for the mists are rising from the
vale

Like clouds of incense from a shrine
of prayer ;

Come up among the hills, the free
strong gale

Is blowing freshly there.

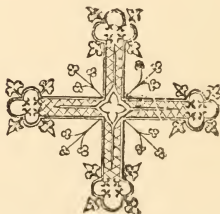
There blooms the purple heather in its prime,
There hums the wild bee in its happy flight ;
There sound the sheep-bells like a fairy chime,
Drifting from height to height.

There float the light cloud shadows, and the blue
Of the eternal dome above is nigh ;
There are no leafy boughs to screen from view
That arch of sapphire sky.

Come, for the wild free solitude is sweet,
And far below shall lie the world of care ;
No sound of strife, no tramp of restless feet
Can ever reach thee there.

Come when thy soul within thee is opprest
With vague misgivings and with musings sad,
For in the sense of freedom there is rest—
The hills shall make thee glad.

Come, for each breath inspires some lofty thought
When the pure mountain air thy spirit fills ;
The lessons that the ancient sages taught
Were learned among the hills.



VIA DOLOROSA.

“ That I may know Him, and the power of His Resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death ;

“ If by any means I might attain unto the Resurrection of the dead.”



ENCLOSED by ruined walls, a narrow
street,
Spanned here and there by arches
grey and worn,
Haunted by shadows, squalid and
forlorn,—

Was this the path that bare His blessed feet ?

O Son of God, whose human strength gave way
Beneath the cross upon this cruel road,
Thy sacred heart sustained a Heavier load,
And bore it bravely through that bitter day !

Our sins once made that path so rough for Thee,
The weight of our transgressions pressed Thee
down ;

Our guilty fingers wove Thy thorny crown,
And nailed Thee, faint and bleeding, to the Tree.

Ah, Lord ! we too our rugged path must tread
In Lenten bitterness and anguish sore,
But Thou hast passed the dolorous way before,
And we must follow where Thy steps have led.

Teach us to suffer meekly ; Thou dost know
The hidden wrong our contrite hearts confess,
Thine eyes can read our deep unworthiness,
Thine ears are open to our cries of woe.

Help us to crush beneath our bleeding feet
All base affections and all hopes unblest ;
The path of anguish leadeth on to rest,
We taste the bitter ere we touch the sweet.

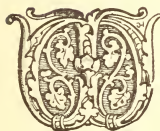
Stray sunbeams wander through these darkened
hours,
And even in the solemn gloom of Lent
Our chastened souls may feel a dim content,
Faint as the breath of springtide's pallid flowers.

Then guide us till the mournful road is past ;
Though wet with tears, our faces learn to smile ;
Sorrow endureth for a little while,
But Easter light and joy shall come at last.



GOOD FRIDAY EVE.

“Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see
if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow.”



WILL they think of Thy Cross and
Thy sorrow,
Thy pain that no mortal can
know?

Will they watch for a few hours
to-morrow

With Thee in Thine infinite woe,
And turn from the world's crowded places
Awhile with Thy people to be,
To kneel with the tears on their faces,
And come in contrition to Thee?

Will they weep for the Heart that was broken
That they might find comfort and bliss?
And oh, will they give Thee no token
To show that they love Thee for this?
No sigh for the Brow that was bleeding,
No tear for the spear-smitten Side!
Alas! will they pass on unheeding,
As if no Redeemer had died?

O teach them with earnest endeavour
To seek Thee while yet there is time ;
Thy gates are not open for ever,
Thy church-bells will ring their last chime :
That Voice full of soft invitation
That pleads with the obdurate heart,
Hereafter in just indignation
Shall say to the godless, " Depart."

Lord, show them Thine anguish to-morrow ;
And call unto those that pass by,
" Come, look on My passion and sorrow,
And turn ye, for why will ye die ?
I suffered, that ye might have pardon,
I died, that your souls might be free,
I bled, for the hearts that ye harden ;
And will ye not come unto Me ?"

Let us who have tasted Thy sweetness,
Learn more of the depth of Thy woes ;
For love is not love in completeness
If sweetness is all that it knows ;
It needeth the bitter to make it
All perfect as love ought to be ;
Then mix Thou the cup, Lord, we take it,
And drink it to-morrow with Thee.



THE HARDEST TIME OF ALL.

“Hope deferred maketh the heart sick : but when the desire
cometh, it is as a tree of life.”



HERE are days of silent sorrow
In the seasons of our life,
There are wild despairing moments,
There are hours of mental strife ;
There are times of stony anguish,
When the tears refuse to fall ;
But the waiting time, my brothers,
Is the hardest time of all.

Youth and love are oft impatient,
Seeking things beyond their reach ;
And the heart grows sick of hoping
Ere it learns what life can teach :
For before the fruit be gathered
We must see the blossoms fall ;
And the waiting time, my brothers,
Is the hardest time of all.

We can bear the heat of conflict,
Though the sudden crushing blow,
Beating back our gathered forces,
For a moment lays us low ;

We may rise again beneath it,
None the weaker for the fall ;
But the waiting time, my brothers,
Is the hardest time of all.

For it wears the eager spirit
As the salt waves wear the stone ;
And the garb of hope grows threadbare,
Till the brightest tints are flown :
Then amid youth's radiant tresses
Silent snows begin to fall ;
Oh, the waiting time, my brothers,
Is the hardest time of all !

But at last we learn the lesson
That God knoweth what is best ;
For with wisdom cometh patience,
And of patience cometh rest ;
Yea,—a golden thread is shining
Through the tangled woof of fate ;
And our hearts shall thank Him meekly,
That He taught us how to wait.



AN AUTUMN MESSAGE.

“In the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart, Thy comforts have refreshed my soul.”

N the dreamy autumn sunlight sleep the
dim hills far away,
And softly shines the silver mist across
the fields to-day ;
The sweet-brier flaunts its scarlet now, and
droops the laden vine,
And pearly jasmine-blossoms scent this quiet room
of mine.

They are falling, ever falling, those pale stars so
purely white,
They strew the level sward around like little flakes
of light ;
A breeze comes up this morning, and it freshens
from the sea,
And drifting through the casement, whispers
tenderly to me.

O the breeze,—where has it wandered ere it sought
my chamber here?
Does it come to bring a message from the scenes
I hold so dear?
Has it passed an ancient city where the early
morning air
Is hallowed by the church-bells ringing out the call
to prayer?

While slowly through the solemn church the virgin
sunbeams crept,
Perchance along those stately aisles the sighing
zephyr swept,
And whispered near the windows where the burning
colours fell
On the saintly sculptured faces with a beauty none
can tell.

I am here amid the dropping leaves and fading
Autumn flowers,
While steals the chilly twilight through the wan
October bowers ;
But the lilies keep their lustre on those sacred
chancel panes,
And the sanctuary's glory is a light that never wanes.

The breeze has gone : it strayed away, along the
dingle side ;
It crept among the braken there, and laid it down
and died :
The day's first prime is over, but the bees are
booming yet
Round the fuchsia's waxen petals, and the beds of
mignonette.

When the snowflakes hide my garden, and the
cottage porch is bare,
And mine eyes are seeking vainly for the wealth of
foliage there,

I can picture all the beauty in a land beyond my
gaze,
And my spirit, looking upward, will not mourn for
summer days !

And it may be that a breeze will come as it hath
come to-day
With a message and a token from that city far away ;
With a murmur of the music from the ancient
church I love,
Drifting softly through my fancy like the low notes
of a dove.

There will come another message, but I may not
know the time,
Whether it shall be at even, or at morning's early
prime ;
It will reach me from a City that hath streets of
purest gold,
Where the gates of pearl stand open, and the
treasures are untold.

There the bliss is never ended, and the song is
never done,
There the silver wings of angels shine around the
Holy One ;
And the white robes of the ransomed gleam beside
the crystal sea :—
Should I turn aside or tremble, when that message
comes to me ?

THE FATHER'S GUIDANCE.

“He shall convert my soul, and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.”



DARED not trust my wayward will,
I had no earthly guide ;
In doubt and bitter loneliness
For help and strength I cried ;
And Thou wert near,—an answer came
To soothe my troubled breast ;
I trusted in Thy worthy Name,
And Thou hast brought me rest.

I do not ask a smoother way,
From thorns and dangers free ;
It is enough if I retain
My fellowship with Thee :
I cannot wander while Thy hand
So firmly claspeth mine,
And through a dry and barren land
Thy streams of mercy shine.

Thy comforts have refreshed my soul,
Thy sunshine gilds my way ;
In weakness and in weariness
Thy promise is my stay ;

The secret sorrows of my heart
To Thee are fully known ;
Yea, though the joys of life depart
I cannot feel alone.

And if I toil while others dream
And sow while others reap,
O teach me for Thy blessed sake
To weep with those that weep !
Teach me in faith and lowliness
Some loving word to say ;
Or drop some little flower to bless
The mourner's rugged way.

The deeds that He would have me do
Are wrought by love and prayer ;
A world of lowly charities
Awaits His servant's care ;
I need not seek some high emprise,
Or lofty work for God,
While crowds of simple duties rise
Like daisies from the sod.

With gentle hand He leads me on ;—
The shadows longer grow,
And softly o'er "the hills of time"
I feel the night-winds blow ;
Why should I tremble, when I see
That valley, hushed and dim ?
His rod and staff shall comfort me,
And I am safe with Him.

STORM AND CALM.

“I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord.”



HE day had opened with a storm of
showers,
And winds awoke to greet that
Sunday morn ;
The garden-walks were strewn with
broken flowers
And scattered petals from the roses torn.

Scarlet and gold and purple blossoms lay
All drenched and deadened by the blinding rain ;
I knew that when the tempest passed away,
Their ruined beauty could not bloom again.

Sometimes athwart the furrowed autumn slopes,
A sea-gull, driven inland, flashed along ;
But all the fields were dark as blighted hopes,
And all the woods were void of choral song.

Yet as the day wore on, that leaden sky
Showed rifts of silver gleaming here and there ;
The loud wind sank into a sobbing sigh,
And sweetly chimed the bells for evening prayer.

A stormy sunset,—and the wild red light
Flushed the grey, ivied tower with crimson glow ;
Long golden rays of glory, dazzling bright,
Slanted across the mossy graves below.

In the old church the solemn organ strain
Like a deep voice through troubled bosoms
thrilled ;
Ah, who can tell what throbs of hidden pain
Those blessed melodies have soothed and stilled !

How sweet the calm within His temple seemed
After the tumult of that dreary day !
How tenderly the waning daylight beamed
On lofty arch and ancient column grey !

Without—the misty landscape bathed in tears,
The pale, wet blossoms clinging to the sod ;
Within—the sacred harmony that cheers
The Christian spirit with the peace of God !

Thus, Father, let us ever seek Thy rest
In times of weariness and bitter woe ;
Finding a shelter in Thy loving breast
When grief has laid our brightest treasures low.

Teach us by faith to lift our thoughts above
The ruined joys that strew these earthly ways ;
Until we lose all sorrow in Thy love,
And change our minor notes to songs of praise.

THE FOOLISH VIRGINS.

“While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered
and slept.”



WHEN will the Bridegroom come?
The birds are waking
The budding forests from their
long repose:

And through dark clods, the tender snowdrop
breaking,

Her pallid bosom shows.

O sisters, must our lamps be ever burning?

Our eyes are weary, and our hopes decline;
Long have we waited for the Lord's returning,
And yet He sends no sign.

Still onward glide the days:—a sound of sighing
Makes mournful music in the boughs o'erhead;
And heaps of brown and amber leaves are lying
About the path we tread.

Why comes He not? O friends, His promise
faileth!

Let us lie down awhile, and take our rest,
Lulled by this melancholy wind that waileth
Over earth's faded breast.

The day has died away;—our lamps grow dimmer,
Fresh oil shall feed them when to-morrow's light
Illumes the east;—and see, their feeble glimmer
Will last throughout the night.

Rest, sisters, for your eyes are slumber-laden,
 Why should ye pause awhile your lamps to trim?
 The Bridegroom comes not yet;—each weary
 maiden

May sleep, and dream of Him.

Awake! awake! Through midnight stillness ringing
 Comes the sharp echo of that sudden cry!
 Rise, virgins;—hear the herald angels singing,
 “The Bridegroom draweth nigh.”

Ah, woe for us! Our last faint sparks are dying,
 And nearer, nearer sounds that warning shout;
 O give us oil,—sweet sisters, hear our crying—
 Help, for our lamps go out!

Hear us, the sadness of your glance appalleth!
 O friends, have ye not known and loved us well?
 Like drops of icy rain that answer falleth—
 “Go ye to them that sell.”

The door is shut;—yet He is full of kindness,
 His tender love will pardon human sin:
 The Bridegroom hath compassion on our blindness,
 And He will let us in.

Lord, open unto us;—O King, receive us,
 Our deep unworthiness and guilt we own;
 Thou art so merciful, Thou wilt not leave us
 In this dark night alone.

He speaks,—that solemn voice so calm and holy,
 Its tone of ancient pity hath forgot;
 Upon our souls the awful truth dawns slowly,—
 Lost—for *He knows us not!*

THE BAPTISM OF SUFFERING.

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you; as though some strange thing happened unto you :

“But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings ; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.”



F thou hast known some parting worse than
death,
The breaking of a tie that was thine all ;
A pang that left thee hopeless,—when thy
breath

Came slowly, and thy tears refused to fall ;
Come in thy bitterness and gloom, and see
The moonlit Garden where He wept for thee.

If thou art stricken for His blessed sake

Who bare for thee the scourge’s cruel sting,
Rejoice, thy Lord hath called thee to partake
Of His own baptism of suffering ;
Low in that olive-shade He bowed for thee ;
Bear on—remembering Gethsemane.

Bear on—for He hath loved thee, and thy tears
Shall change to gems, and glitter on thy brow
In the calm light of the eternal years ;

And thy worn soul, so chafed and fettered now,
Shall know the freedom that He won for thee
In the lone shadows of Gethsemane.

CONFIRMATION HYMN.

“I will pay my vows unto the Lord, in the sight of all His people, in the courts of the Lord’s house.”



COME in all reverence and deep contri-
tion,

Subdued by memories of youthful sin,
Kneel at His throne in lowliest sub-
mission,

And with this day the better life begin.

Come with sweet thoughts of Jesus, and in meekness

Take up the cross, and follow in His way ;

His strength shall be made perfect in your weakness,

His grace shall be your comfort and your stay.

Renew your vows,—and seek His mercy only,

To arm the trembling spirit for the strife ;

Ye shall not fight the world’s great battle lonely,

Soldiers of Christ, ye bear a charmed life.

Come, and the Holy Dove each promise sealing

Shall fill your hearts and minds with pure desire ;

Yea, while ye kneel, in humble prayer appealing,

His gifts descend like Pentecostal fire.

And ever when the sacred rite is ended,

Ye will have need of Jesus on your way ;

Need of His love and watchful guidance blended,

To keep the precious strength ye gain to-day.

Tender and clear as stars at even burning

In dusky winter skies from east to west,

So shall ye shine,—that all, your light discerning,

May long to share that brightness calm and blest.

SUNDAY MORNING HYMN.

“The voice of praise and thanksgiving among such as keep
holy day.”

 DAY of holy recollections,
Memories of praise and prayer,
Stirring all our deep affections,
Hushing thoughts of worldly care ;
Coming like the breath of summer
Stealing over wintry lands,
Lifting up the weary spirit,
Strengthening the feeble hands.

Day of peace—such depths revealing
Of the love of Christ our King ;
Day of rest—what balm of healing
Can thy hallowed moments bring !
Foretaste of the bliss eternal
That His ransomed ones shall know,
Blessed gift of consolation
To His waiting church below.

In Thy sunlight seeing clearer
Glimpses of the land of love,
By Thy worship drawing nearer
To the sinless souls above,

Purified and soothed, and raisèd
 From earth's sordid mire and clay,
 Evermore our hearts adore Thee
 For Thy hallowed seventh day !

We Thy pilgrims, fainting, fasting,
 Seek of Thee 'Thy living bread ;
 By Thy bounty everlasting
 Let the gracious food be spread ;
 Fill the chalice of salvation
 From that crimson Fount of Thine ;
 Clothe us in the marriage-garment
 Ere we taste the feast divine.

From these blessed hours we borrow
 Music that shall linger long,
 And the labours of to-morrow
 Shall be cheered by holy song ;
 Followed still by chanting voices,
 We may tread life's rugged way,
 Ever in our hearts repeating
 Anthems that we sing to-day.

Alleluia ! Lord of heaven,
 Throned in Triune majesty !
 On this day of all the seven
 Sweetest hymns shall rise to Thee !
 Alleluia ! King of glory,
 Giver of all gifts of grace,
 Let our humble praise ascending,
 Reach Thee in Thy holy place.

SUNDAY EVENING HYMN.

“ Have I not remembered Thee in my bed, and thought upon
Thee when I was waking ? ”

OW that our holy day is done,
Our day so blest and bright,
Lord, for the sake of Thy dear Son,
Vouchsafe us rest to-night.

Put thoughts of worldly strife aside,
Let love and faith increase ;
Grant us, on this calm eventide,
Thine own best gift of peace.

Faint echoes of our sacred songs
Shall haunt each weary brain,
Even in sleep the heart prolongs
Our holy Sabbath strain.

And in our busy waking hours,
O Father, still we pray,
Let music from immortal bowers
Lighten the toils of day.

Send down through all the jars of time
Some undertone of love,
A message from Thy sinless clime
Of perfect bliss above.

Such songs shall help us to endure
 The world's discordant strife,
 And keep our spirits calm and pure
 Amid the cares of life.

Until this earthly conflict cease,
 Lord, let us faithful be ;
 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace
 Whose mind is stayed on Thee.



ALLELUIA.

“Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.”



AND of peace, and love, and brightness,
Earthly spirits pine for thee !
Longing for those blessed regions
Where all fettered hearts are free ;
Alleluia, Alleluia !
Sing Thy white-robed company.

Endless glory shineth in thee,
For thy sun can never wane ;
On thy gleaming, golden pavement,
Walk the holy angel train ;
Alleluia, Alleluia !
Rolls the everlasting strain.

Golden harps and saintly voices
All their hallowed music pour ;
While thy ransomed sons and daughters
Their Redeemer's name adore ;
Alleluia, Alleluia !
Sing thy children evermore.

With the deep harmonious anthem
Blends no mournful minor tone,
To the citizens of heaven
Sighs and tears are never known ;
Alleluia, Alleluia !
Echoes round the great White Throne.

Lead us, O thou gentle Saviour,
Upward to that holy place ;
Washed, and ransomed, and forgiven
By Thy wondrous work of grace ;
Alleluia, Alleluia !
We shall sing before Thy face.



HYMN.

“ He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.”



HEART of Jesus, pierced for me,
Let my heart find rest in Thee ;
Stream of pardon—tide of grace,
Purge away each sinful trace ;
Let that flood celestial, flow
Till my soul is white as snow.
Riven Heart, O let me be
Sheltered, cleansed, and blest in Thee !

Arms of Jesus, stretched for me
On the Cross in agony,
Fold me in a sure embrace,
Hold me by the might of grace,
Make me steadfast in the fight,
Keep me from all false delight ;
Clasp me close, until I stand
Safe within the better land.

Voice of Jesus, once for me
Raised in tones of misery,
When the bitter cry went up,
“ Father, take away this cup !”

Soothe me in my dark distress,
Warn me in my heedlessness ;
Plead for me, O Voice divine,
Blend my feeble prayers with Thine.

Love of Jesus, set on me,
Seeing all that was to be,
Knowing all the shame and scorn
That should meet the Virgin-born ;
Love, that never sank or failed
When the powers of sin prevailed—
Fill my heart,—and let me be
Satisfied alone with Thee.



HYMN.

“Sing ye praises with understanding.”

FOR all Thy care we bless Thee,
O Father, God of might !
For golden hours of morning,
And quiet hours of night :
Thine is the arm that shields us
When danger threatens nigh,
And Thine the hand that yields us
Rich gifts of earth and sky.

For all Thy love we bless Thee ;
No mortal lips can speak
Thy comfort to the weary,
Thy pity for the weak :
By Thee life's path is brightened
With sunshine and with song ;
The heavy loads are lightened,
The feeble hearts made strong.

For all Thy peace we bless Thee,
That peace that spreads so wide ;
The gracious benediction
That falls upon Thy Bride ;
For quiet meditation
In days of prayer and fast,
For holy jubilation
When Lenten shades are past.

For all Thy grace we bless Thee,
That grace so full and free ;
The banquet of salvation
So richly spread by Thee ;
When soul and body falter,
And faith hath languid grown,
We know " we have an Altar "
Where Thou wilt meet Thine own.

For all Thy truth we bless Thee ;
Our human vows are frail,
But through the strife of ages
Thy word can never fail :
The kingdoms shall be broken,
The mighty ones will fall,
The promise Thou hast spoken
Shall triumph over all.

For all Thy saints we bless Thee,
Our dearest ones who trod
The dark and thorny pathway
That led them home to God ;
For all who follow slowly
The Master's toilsome way,
The brave, the pure, the lowly,
Who strive, and watch, and pray.

For Thine own Church we bless Thee,
Thy Spouse, our Mother dear ;
O grant her strength and wisdom
To keep her vigil here !

The watch is sad and weary,
The Bridegroom tarries long ;
But soon her " Miserere "
Shall change to festal song !

O teach us how to praise Thee,
And touch our lips with fire !
Yea, let Thy Dove descending,
Our hearts and minds inspire ;
Thus toiling, watching, singing,
We tread our desert way,
And every hour is bringing
Nearer, the dawn of day.



HYMNS FOR CHILDREN.

I.

“The vineyard which Thy right hand hath planted.”

HE hath gone into His garden
 To cull His flowerets fair ;
 And many a tender blossom
 Is blooming sweetly there.
 He feeds among the lilies,
 He banquets on the vine ;
 He sends the soft south breezes,
 And bids His sunlight shine.

Are we within that garden ?
 Are we among that band,
 The flowers of His affection
 That bloom beneath His hand ?
 Lord Jesus, there enclose us,
 And let us thrive and grow ;
 The fruit of Thy fair vineyard,
 Thy lilies white as snow.

He hath gone into His garden,
 His sacred walls enclose
 The cedar and the sapling,
 The rose-bud and the rose :

And not a bud can perish,
And not a leaf can fall
Within the Saviour's garden,
Because He loveth all.

He numbers all His blossoms ;
The smallest flowers must be
As precious to the Master
As palm or cedar tree ;
With watchful care He seeks them,
In noontide or in shade ;
And silver showers fall softly
To freshen those that fade.

He comes to gather lilies ;
We may not know the hour
That makes some earthly blossom
A bright immortal flower :
Then, Lord, may we be ready
And waiting for Thy hand,
That we may bloom in glory
In Thine eternal land.



HYMNS FOR CHILDREN.

II.

“A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse.”

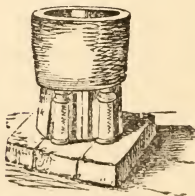
 N Thy holy garden ground,
 Jesus, let us all be found ;
 Bid that soft south wind of Thine
 Breathe upon the tender vine,
 Let Thine angel-guards, we pray,
 Scare the hungry birds away :
 Watch the soil where Thou hast sown,
 Till Thy precious plants are grown.

Touched by Thine all-powerful hand
 Let the little buds expand ;
 Bid the folded leaves unveil
 Fragrant blossoms fair and pale ;
 Master, may Thy lilies grow
 White and pure as driven snow,
 Let Thy gracious dew and rain
 Cleanse the flowers from earthly stain.

In Thy holy garden ground
 If one drooping bough be found,
 Spare the life which Thou didst give,
 Bid the dying member live ;

Lift it from the miry sod
Nearer to the skies of God,
Till it flourish, strong and free,
In its beauty praising Thee.

Fence Thy holy garden ground
From the wilderness around ;
Chase the serpent from its bowers,
Guard Thine own beloved flowers ;
Let no tainted breath creep in
From the poisoned haunts of sin ;
Keep them from the world apart,
Make them pure, as pure Thou art.



HOLY COMMUNION.—HYMN I.

“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.”



COMFORTER divine,
Come to this heart of mine,
Come and prepare my dear Re-
deemer's dwelling ;
From Thy white wings outspread,
Let hope and peace be shed,
All vain and troubled thoughts and cares expelling.

Show me each secret sin
That lies so deep within,
Stifling with poisoned breath all pure emotion ;
Let sighs of earnest prayer
Clear all the tainted air,
Till it grows odorous with true devotion.

Jesus, I humbly pray,
Enter my soul to-day,
In Bread and Wine Thyself to me revealing ;
Lord, make me all Thine own,
Filled with Thy love alone,
Dead to the world and every sinful feeling.

Jesus, I humbly pray
That Thou wilt take away
The earth-born mists wherewith my faith is
shrouded ;
Here let me see Thy face,
In this Thy dwelling-place ;
Shine on me, Saviour, in Thy light unclouded.

Come, Jesus, and restore
Each waning grace once more,
And let me taste Thee in the cup of blessing ;
Pour from Thy heart to mine
Thy precious blood divine ;
Let me go hence, the Life of life possessing.

Feed me with living bread,
Let me be comforted
With the eternal food that cannot perish ;
And when the Feast is done,
Rest with me, Holy One,
And teach me how Thy heavenly grace to cherish.



HOLY COMMUNION.—HYMN II.

“Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you : for Him hath God the Father sealed.”

LAY down thy burden for a little space,
 And taste the fulness of thy Saviour's
 grace ;
 Come, for this Feast supplies thy
 deepest need,
 His Flesh and Blood are meat and
 drink indeed.

Here, from thy dear Redeemer's heart to thine
 Flows the life-giving stream in crimson wine :
 Here in the bread, thy hungry soul may take
 His sacred Body, given for thy sake.

Filled with His strength, thy spirit shall be strong
 To fight against the foes that do thee wrong ;
 A purer Life within thy life shall lie,
 Giving thee grace to win the victory.

This heavenly food shall help thee to sustain
 Life's weary load of bitterness and pain ;
 The precious banquet He prepares to-day,
 Keeps thee from fainting in the narrow way.

Come, thirsty soul, the cup is never dry,
His blood still flows this chalice to supply ;
Come, famished heart, behold His table spread !
Himself the Feast, the everlasting Bread.

Come, and thy doubts and fears shall all subside
In the dear presence of the Crucified ;
Come, and the company of heaven above
Shall join thee in this mystery of love.

With angels and archangels thou shalt feel
The joy that only Jesus can reveal ;
With angels and archangels thou shalt raise
The Eucharistic strain of fervent praise.



HOLY COMMUNION.—HYMN III.

“Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find.”



SHINE through the mists of earth to-day,
O face of Christ, unchanged, divine !
Meet me at Thine own feast, I pray,
Draw near, O soul of Christ, to mine !

Once Thou wert bruised for my sake,
O living Manna from on high !
Grant me with humble heart to take
The food that still can satisfy.

O Rock of Israel ! smitten sore
Once in the wilderness for me ;
Here would I drink, and thirst no more,
Of that pure tide that flowed from Thee.

*And still that blended stream imparts
Its precious power to heal and bless ;
The Blood, to pardon contrite hearts,
The Water, bringing holiness.

* “As the Blood which He shed satisfied the Divine Justice, and removed our punishment, so the water washes and cleanses the pardoned soul ; and both these blessings are inseparable, even as the Blood and water which flowed together out of His side.”—*John and Charles Wesley.*

Pardon and purity I need
To cleanse me from my sinful stain,
Lord Jesus, teach me how to plead,
And let no cry ascend in vain.

In lowly penitence I seek
The grace and strength that in Thee dwell ;
My faith is faint, my prayers are weak,
But all my want Thou knowest well.

Thine is the glory, mine the night,
Mine is the strife, and Thine the rest ;
Shine on my darkness, Light of light,
And lead the weary to Thy breast.



HARVEST HYMN.—I.

“Be thankful unto Him, and speak good of His name.”



RAISE to the Father, praise
For blessings freely poured ;
Praise for the golden harvest days,
And garners richly stored.

Praise Him for all His care,
For love that cannot cease ;
For joys that rich and poor may share,
For plenty and for peace.

Praise to the Hand that made
The valleys thick with corn ;
From breezy hill and quiet glade
The grateful strains are borne.

But let a deeper tone
With all our anthems blend ;
Not for these earthly gifts alone
Should songs of praise ascend ;

Praise for the living Bread
Descended from above ;
Lord, let our empty souls be fed
At Thy great feast of love !

Christ, for Thy Church's sake,
Thy Body Thou didst give ;
O grant us grace Thy bread to take,
That we may eat and live.

Enter each heart, we pray,
Supply our deepest need ;
And make Thy sacred Flesh to-day
Our Bread of life indeed !



HARVEST HYMN.—II.

“Yea, a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful.”

LORD of the golden harvest,
 To Thee our songs we raise ;
 With endless adoration
 We offer grateful praise.
 Again our barns are teeming
 With piles of ripened sheaves ;
 Again the mellow Autumn
 Her fruitful garland weaves.

From purple-crested mountains,
 From valleys green and low,
 The strains of high thanksgiving
 From happy hearts shall flow ;
 And joyful choirs shall praise Thee
 Within Thy holy walls,
 While like the dew from heaven
 Thy benediction falls.

O Thou whose love hath given
 These bounties of Thy grace,
 Come to the hearts that seek Thee,
 In this Thy dwelling-place.

Let hungry souls be strengthened
To bear earth's weary strife,
With Bread so freely broken,
And Wine of deathless life.

Watch Thou Thy faithful children
In this wide world of care,
For seeds of life eternal
The soil Thyself prepare ;
The good grain sown in weakness
Upraised in power shall be,
The sowers and the reapers
Shall yet rejoice with Thee.

O God of life and glory,
In that triumphal day
When all Thy wheat is gathered,
And tares are swept away ;
Within Thy blessed garner
May we be safely stored,
The fruits of Christ's redemption,
The harvest of the Lord !

To Father, Son, and Spirit,
Our thankful songs are due,
We magnify and bless Thee,
With love and homage true ;
Our everlasting gladness
From Thy great mercy springs,
Lord of the golden harvest,
We hail Thee, King of kings !

